

Message Text

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ORIGIN ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-15 ISO-00 SIG-03 CIAE-00 H-02
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS PRIORITY
USDEL MBFR VIENNA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY

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USSALTTWO/CTB

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 28 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL
INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX, SOFIA FOR AMBASSADOR

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1. DON OBERDORFER OF WASHINGTON POST REPORTED FROM NEW YORK
THAT VANCE AND GROMYKO HAD BEGUN "AN IMPORTANT AND POSSIBLY
FINAL ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS ON NEW SALT TREATY YESTERDAY."
HE SAID VANCE TOLD NEWSMEN AFTER TWO-HOUR MEETING OF U.S.
AND SOVIET NEGOTIATING TEAMS THAT CONCLUSION OF PACT IS
POSSIBLE THIS YEAR. VANCE ANNOUNCED THAT HE AND GROMYKO
WILL MEET PRESIDENT CARTER AT WHITE HOUSE SATURDAY TO DIS-

CUSS REMAINING ISSUES. OBERDORFER SAID VANCE WOULD GIVE NO DETAILS OF MEETING AND DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER FEW REMAINING DIFFERENCES HAD BEEN NARROWED. VANCE, HE SAID, INDICATED THAT GROMYKO GAVE SOVIET REPLIES TO U.S. PROPOSALS WHICH WERE TAKEN TO MOSCOW EARLIER THIS MONTH BY WARNKE. OBERDORFER SAID OFFICIALS EMPHASIZED THAT IF SOVIETS ARE IN MOOD TO COMPROMISE SALT AGREEMENTS MAY SUDDENLY ACQUIRE MOMENTUM OF THEIR OWN.

2. UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL REPORTED THAT FOLLOWING OPENING ROUND OF TALKS WITH GROMYKO, VANCE SAID HE WAS

"NEITHER ENCOURAGED NOR DISCOURAGED," AND ADDED, "I BELIEVE IT IS POSSIBLE TO REACH TREATY THIS YEAR."

3. WASHINGTON POST PUBLISHED BRIEF REUTER DISPATCH QUOTING ENERGY DEPARTMENT AS ANNOUNCING THAT U.S. CONDUCTED TWO UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS IN 20 TO 150 KILOTON RANGE AT NUCLEAR TEST SITE IN NEVADA YESTERDAY.

4. IN AN EDITORIAL, WASHINGTON POST CHARGED THAT TWO NUCLEAR WEAPONS LABS -- LOS ALAMOS AND LIVERMORE -- AND THEIR SYMPATHIZERS IN ENERGY AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENTS ARE CONDUCTING CAMPAIGN TO GET PRESIDENT CARTER TO WEAKEN CTB THAT HE IS NEGOTIATING WITH SOVIETS AND BRITISH IN GENEVA. ON ONE FRONT, POST SAID, LABS CONTEND THAT TREATY SHOULD UNCLASSIFIED

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LET U.S. CONDUCT OCCASIONAL UNDERGROUND TESTS TO CHECK QUALITY OF STOCKPILED WARHEADS. LABS FURTHER ARGUE THAT, IF CTB IS COMPLETED, IT SHOULD RUN FOR ONLY THREE YEARS. EXPRESSING HOPE THAT PRESIDENT RESISTS THIS ATTEMPT, POST DECLARED THAT "FOR POLITICAL REASONS TEST BAN MAY HAVE TO STAND IN LINE BEHIND SALT TREATY, BUT MEANWHILE, ANXIOUS WOULD-BE TESTERS ARE TRYING TO BEAT DOWN AMERICAN NEGOTIATING POSITION. IT MUST NOT HAPPEN."

5. MICHAEL GETLER OF WASHINGTON POST, REPORTING FROM VIENNA, SAID ALLIED OFFICERS AT NEW ROUND OF MBFR TALKS "CLAIM THAT SOVIET BLOC IS 'EITHER FIDDLING, CHEATING OR LYING' ABOUT NUMBER OF TROOPS IT HAS ALONG CENTRAL EUROPEAN FRONT. GETLER QUOTED OFFICIALS AS SAYING BIGGEST DISCREPANCIES ARE IN NUMBER OF SOVIET AND POLISH TROOPS, AS OPPOSED TO EAST GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAK SOLDIERS, THAT WARSAW PACT CLAIMS ARE IN REGION COVERED BY NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID SENIOR COMMUNIST DIPLOMAT COUNTERS, "HOW CAN THEY TALK THAT WAY, THEY HAVE NO ROSTER" OF OUR MILITARY UNITS OR PERSONNEL. GETLER SAID THIS ISSUE RAISES PUZZLING QUESTION FOR WESTERN OFFICIALS OF WHY SOVIETS ARE "FIDDLING, CHEATING OR LYING" OVERTLY TO WEST IN FIELD WHERE WESTERN

INTELLIGENCE IS HIGHLY CONFIDENT OF ITS ESTIMATES. "ISSUE REPRESENTS AN ENORMOUS AND POSSIBLY INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLE THAT MUST BE OVERCOME IF THESE LONG-STALLED NEGOTIATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN GOING ON FOR FIVE YEARS HERE ARE EVER TO YIELD AN AGREEMENT THAT WILL REDUCE MILITARY FORCES, AND HOPEFULLY TENSIONS, ALONG MOST CRITICAL EAST-WEST BORDER."

6. CHARLES CORDDRY OF BALTIMORE SUN SAID SOVIET UNION STILL IS INSTALLING NEW INTERCONTINENTAL MISSILES AT RATE OF ABOUT 150 ANNUALLY BUT, CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS, IT HAS FAILED TO START TESTING EVER LATER TYPES KNOWN TO BE UNDER DEVELOPMENT. HE SAID DEFENSE OFFICIAL, IN WIDE-RANGING ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET MILITARY EFFORTS, STATED THAT ONE OF

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LEAST NOTED ASPECTS IS CONTINUOUS STRENGTHENING OF SOVIET POSITIONS ALONG LONG BORDER WITH CHINA. "WHILE OFFICIAL CONVEYED PICTURE OF CONTINUING SOVIET MILITARY BUILDUP, HE ALSO PREDICTED THAT MAJOR MANPOWER PROBLEMS WOULD BESET RUSSIAN FORCES IN MID-1980S WHEN SUPPLY OF 18-YEAR-OLDS TO MAN CONSCRIPT FORCES IS GOING TO DROP SHARPLY. CORDDRY SAID CONTINUING EMPLACEMENT OF MUCH-PUBLICIZED SS17, SS18 AND SS19 MISSILES IS IN LINE WITH EXISTING ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS WHICH PERMIT REPLACEMENT OF OLD ROCKETS,BUT NO INCREASE IN TOTAL NUMBERS.

7. JAMES MCCARTNEY OF PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER QUOTED WHITE HOUSE SOURCES AS SAYING AUTUMN SUMMIT MEETING BETWEEN CARTER AND BREZHNEV AS SYMBOLIC CLIMAX TO SALT TWO NEGOTIATIONS IS "GOOD POSSIBILITY." HE SAID OFFICIALS WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT DELAYS STILL WERE POSSIBLE AND THAT IN PAST TECHNICALITIES OFTEN HAD HELD UP PROGRESS. CHRISTOPHER

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